

**CITY COUNCIL  
BUSINESS/STUDY SESSION MINUTES  
May 10, 2011**

The Business/Study Session of the Monroe City Council was held on May 10, 2011, in the Council Chambers at City Hall. Mayor Robert Zimmerman called the meeting to order at 7:00 p.m.

Councilpersons present: Balk, Rodriguez, Cudaback, Tuttle, Stima, Williams, and Goering.

Staff present: Brazel, Feilberg, Quenzer, Smith, Nelson, Lande, and Martinson.

City Attorney Zach Lell was not present.

The meeting was opened with the Pledge of Allegiance.

**COMMENTS FROM CITIZENS**

No citizens wished to address Council.

**BUSINESS & ACTION ITEMS**

**ANNOUNCEMENTS & PRESENTATIONS**

**Community Transit Update/Todd Morrow**

Mayor Zimmerman introduced Todd Morrow, Chief of Strategic Communications at Community Transit (CT). Mr. Morrow thanked Councilperson Stima for his participation on the CT Board as an alternate and a representative for the City of Monroe.

Mr. Morrow gave a presentation giving an overview of CT services and ridership, which provides transportation for 10 million passengers per year on 53 local and commuter bus routes, VanPool, and DART. They have programs in place to encourage people to take transit or carpool, rather than driving their cars. There are 299 people on average per day for daily boardings in Monroe, which include 5 routes and 51 bus stops. He explained CT's long-range transit plan and their transit emphasis corridor approach.

Revenues have fallen at Community Transit. Sales tax had made up 70% of their operating revenue in the past and now makes up just 60%. This will create \$207 Million in lost revenue by 2013. He explained the cuts in programs, administrative costs, services and reduction in staff. They will involve communities in their transit decisions, and will present in Monroe on 6/15/11, 6:00 p.m., Monroe High School. There will be a public hearing in July for the final service change plan in the summer. They are continuing to look for new sources of revenue and are working on grants and other options. They have a "Buy Local" program to encourage people to shop locally. They are sorry to have to cut services; they know people rely on them.

Mayor Zimmerman stated that he will propose that the new website have a link to Community Transit when it is completed.

**Joint Meeting: Council/US2 Coalition**

Mayor Zimmerman explained that he had asked for a joint meeting with the US2 Coalition. He introduced US2 Coalition Chairman, Fred Walser, and Jeffrey Beeler, Coalition Treasurer and Sultan Councilmember.

Chairman Walser gave the history of the Coalition and why it was formed. It was started as a result of three deaths within six months at Fern Bluff and Highway 2. Citizens contacted him wanting something done about the accidents on US2. They contacted Kirk Pearson and set up a meeting, which 300 people attended. The Department of Transportation (DOT) put \$1.4M into improvements at Fern Bluff; there have been no crashes there since. He gave the statistics of the various accidents, injuries and deaths and the efforts they have made in going to the legislators in Washington, DC, to get money. After being told they needed a Route Development Plan, they obtained \$500,000 and did a route development plan. After receiving funding from other sources, they were able to get 55 safety improvements.

Their number one item is the Monroe bypass, which would cost \$120M for just one Phase. The bypass would take 10,000 cars off US2 per day. Representative Mike Armstrong from Wenatchee came to Monroe October 2010, and gave a presentation to the Coalition explaining the three key projects between Spokane and Everett, with one being the US2 bypass. He reported that public/private partnerships are becoming more acceptable to the government and gave examples. Chairman Walser would like to ask Representatives Armstrong and Clibborn to meet with Council about this matter. Representative Armstrong sees it happening in five years. The urgency is that it will improve safety, capacity, freight mobility, and improve the economy. They are lobbying others to get behind the movement. Bipartisan groups are working very well together to try to make this happen.

The next steps would be meeting with Representative Armstrong and contacting legislators through e-mails and phone calls. They are coordinating all their efforts to lobby the legislators. The Monroe bypass is their key focus.

Chairman Walser also gave a brief history on Traffic Safety Corridor designation. After Governor Gregoire toured US2, the next morning, he got a call from the DOT director asking what they would like. The State designated 56 miles as a "Traffic Safety Corridor", which increased funding, engineering, and education opportunities. They have developed political contacts for grants. The City has also received grants for intersection improvements. The City has political connections and could use it to add weight to their requests.

Mayor Zimmerman thanked him for the thorough presentation. The City will support the Coalition to help them continue with the cause.

After questions and discussion, the US 2 Safety Coalition presentation concluded.

The motion was made by Councilperson Balk and seconded by Councilperson Goering, to extend the Business portion of the meeting past 8:00 p.m. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

## **Presentation and Proclamation/Public Works Week**

Public Works Director Feilberg explained what Public Works is about and showed a video "A Day Without Public Works" to show the services that wouldn't be in place without the Public Works department.

Mayor Zimmerman read the Proclamation proclaiming May 15-21, 2011, as *Public Works Week*.

## **CONSENT AGENDA**

The motion was made by Councilperson Stima and seconded by Councilperson Rodriguez, to approve the Consent Agenda. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

Items approved: 1) Authorize Mayor to Sign Consultant Agreement/WWTP Phase III Improvements/Construction Administration Services; ~~2-District Court Interlocal Amendment-Judicial Venue for Automated Traffic Safety Camera Program~~ (rescheduled to 5/17).

Mayor Zimmerman explained that there would be a five-minute break to allow Council to read confidential information from the City Attorney.

MEETING RECESSED FOR A FIVE-MINUTE BREAK: 8:37 p.m.  
MEETING RECONVENED INTO REGULAR SESSION: 8:43 p.m.

## **NEW BUSINESS**

### **Review Term Limits for City's Elected Officials to Ensure Reasonable Degree of Rotation in Office**

City Administrator Brazel explained that the draft ordinance was submitted for Council review. The city attorney would like to make additional changes if Council goes forward.

After discussion, there was no action taken by Council.

## **STUDY SESSION ITEMS**

### **Priorities of Government - #1: Improve the Safety of People and Property**

City Administrator Brazel explained why one of the points brought up by Councilperson Stima regarding water fit in with the "Improve the Health and Safety of People and Property" priority Item #1.

After no discussion or input on Item #1, City Administrator opened up the discussion for feedback on Item #2 "Improve the Mobility of People, Goods, and Services".

After discussion, it was determined that next time they would have a review of measurements and a discussion of indicators for Item #2.

### **Discussion: Ballot Vote for 1/10 of 1% Sales Tax Increase for Law Enforcement**

Chief Quenzer explained that this started last fall when they had to lay off police officers. They are experiencing a high amount of overtime. They thought about ways to fund two new police officers. He had conversations with other law enforcement people and heard various ideas for raising funds for officers. After a discussion with Mayor Zimmerman, they came up with this proposal. Since property owners are the minority for service calls

in all cases, they shouldn't be burdened when they aren't using the services. Since the vast majority of people using police services are not property owners, or they live outside the City, sales tax increase is the fairest way to raise funding for officers; the excess funds would be used for other police needs; such as patrol cars. At 1/10 of 1% added to the sales tax, the anticipated amount raised is \$296,000, with the final amount to the city at \$252,000 (after deducting the 15% that goes to the County).

Mayor Zimmerman commented that he would like to see this on the ballot in November. The majority of the actions are not property owners; this is an equitable and fair way to support the department. It would be an increase of 10 cents for every \$100 spent. He always said he would only bring a tax increase if it went to the voters of Monroe. He asked for support from Council and will ask for it from the public.

The motion was made by Councilperson Rodriguez and seconded by Councilperson Stima, to extend the meeting past 10:00 p.m. On vote,

Motion carried 7/0.

Council discussion ensued; and the resolution to authorize a ballot vote will be brought back for adoption on May 17, 2011.

### **Department Reports**

Human Resources Manager, Teri Smith, gave a follow-up report regarding the unauthorized taking of employee information. Some employees have expressed concern about identity theft. They have found a company that provides insurance for identity theft and gave options for providing it or sharing costs with employees.

Mayor Zimmerman stated that they could bring this item back for discussion and give more information. He wanted Council to know that there are concerns.

Chief Quenzer reported that he and the Mayor had worked with Representative Pearson regarding the Washington Administrative Code (WAC) that allows only \$93 per hour for work on cases at the Department of Corrections (DOC). They received a check for \$93,000. He sent the manifesto to the Herald and the Monitor, and then received a call from Eldon Vale who said that there had been a miscommunication and that the full amount would be paid. Mr. Vale also stated that he would work to have the WAC code brought up to date. The City will receive \$133,000.

Public Works Director Feilberg reported that they had been conducting interviews for associate planner.

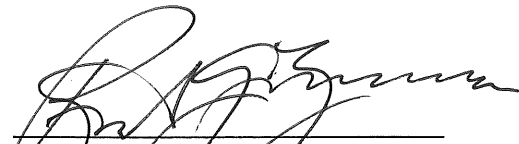
Councilperson Rodriguez read into the record her letter of resignation, which is effective May 31, 2011. She had planned to remain to the end of her term, but had accepted a position in Burlington.

It was agreed that the process to interview for a replacement would start now and be placed on the agenda after the June 10<sup>th</sup> candidate filing deadline.

### **Draft Agenda/May 17, 2011 Council Business Meeting**


Mayor Zimmerman noted the draft agenda and asked Council to call City Administrator Brazel, should they have questions or changes.

MEETING ADJOURNED: 10:38 p.m.



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Robert G. Zimmerman, Mayor



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Eadye Martinson, Deputy City Clerk